

Message Text

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ACTION SS-25

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 SSO-00 NSCE-00 /026 W

----- 093269

O 051750Z DEC 74

FM AMEMBASSY PARIS

TO SECSTATE WASHDC IMMEDIATE 4867

C O N F I D E N T I A L SECTION 01 OF 02 PARIS 29204

EXDIS

E.O. 11652 GDS

TAGS: PFOR, FR

SUBJECT: COURTESY CALL ON MINISTER OF DEFENSE JACQUES
SOUFFLET

1. SUMMARY: MY INITIAL COURTESY CALL DECEMBER 5 ON
DEFENSE MINISTER SOUFFLET DEVELOPED INTO AN HOUR'S
GIVE AND TAKE ON SUBSTANTIVE ISSUES, LARGELY AT
SOUFFLET'S INITIATIVE. HE SAID IT WOULD BE USEFUL TO
REVIEW SOME OF THE TOPICS THAT WILL UNDOUBTEDLY BE ON
THE MARTINIQUE AGENDA. WE DISCUSSED LOC, FRELOC, THE
F-104 REPLACEMENT, NUCLEAR QUESTIONS, US-FRENCH AND
US-EUROPEAN COOPERATION. SOUFFLET WAS FORTHCOMING AND
CORDIAL THROUGHOUT THE MEETING. END SUMMARY.

2. LOC: REFERRING TO THE US/FRENCH STUDY TEAM LOOKING
INTO THE LOC QUESTION, SOUFFLET SAID HE HOPED PROGRESS
COULD BE MADE. OBVIOUSLY, STATIONING AMERICAN TROOPS
OR HAVING U.S. MATERIEL ON FRENCH SOIL IN PEACE-TIME IS
NOT ACCEPTABLE TO THE FRENCH GOVERNMENT. BUT PRESIDENT
GISCARD IS AWARE OF THE PROBLEM, SOUFFLET CONTINUED,
AND WILL HAVE SOMETHING POSITIVE TO SAY ON LOC AT
MARTINIQUE.
COMMENT: SUGGEST STATE AND DOD INCLUDE A THOROUGH
DISCUSSION OF LOC ISSUE IN MARTINIQUE BRIEFING BOOK
FOR PRESIDENT FORD.

3. FRELOC: SOUFFLET SAID THAT WHILE THE SUM INVOLVED
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IN THE FRELOC CLAIM IS NOT OF MAJOR MAGNITUDE, THE GOF

RECOGNIZES THE ISSUE IS AN IRRITANT THAT SHOULD BE SETTLED. HE SAID THE FRENCH HOPE TO SETTLE IT AT MARTINIQUE. WHEN I MENTIONED THE NEW OFFER MADE TO US THROUGH THE QUAI D'ORSAY, SOUFFLET IMPLIED THE FRENCH SIDE MIGHT BE WILLING TO MAKE SOME IMPROVEMENTS. HE REPEATED THAT FRELOC IS AN ISSUE THE FRENCH WOULD LIKE TO DISPOSE OF AT THE SUMMIT.

4. F-104: TURNING TO F-104 REPLACEMENT, SOUFFLET STRESSED THE IMPORTANCE OF THE CONTRACT TO THE FRENCH AERONAUTICAL INDUSTRY. HE SUGGESTED THE U.S. WAS APPLYING POLITICAL PRESSURE IN ATTEMPTING TO SELL THE U.S. PLANE. I STRESSED THAT POLITICS WAS NOT THE ISSUE: RATHER THE ISSUE WAS WHICH PLANE IS THE BEST FOR THE PURPOSES INVOLVED. THE U.S. WILL BE MAKING ITS DECISION IN JANUARY WITH REGARD TO THE YF-16 AND YF-17. I SAID THAT A REPRESENTATIVE OF GENERAL DYNAMICS HAD TOLD ME THAT THE FRENCH WOULD BE OFFERED PARTICIPATION IN THE PRODUCTION SHOULD THE YF-16 BE SELECTED. I ALSO REVIEWED FOR HIM THE SUBSTANCE OF SECRETARY SCHLESINGER'S STATEMENT WITH REGARD TO THE CONSORTIUM. WHEN SOUFFLET REPLIED THAT THE FRENCH DON'T WANT TO BE A SUB-CONTRACTOR I TOLD HIM THAT SUBCONTRACTOR STATUS WASN'T WHAT I UNDERSTOOD U.S. GOVERNMENT AND INDUSTRY HAD IN MIND. WE WERE THINKING RATHER OF A CONSORTIUM WHICH WOULD HAVE OBVIOUS BALANCE OF PAYMENTS, EMPLOYMENT AND OTHER ECONOMIC ADVANTAGES FOR THE FRENCH SHOULD THE AMERICAN PLANE BE SELECTED BY OUR NATO ALLIES. SOUFFLET SAID THAT SECRETARY OF THE AIR FORCE MCLUCAS HAD ONCE MENTIONED TO HIM THE POSSIBILITY OF MARKET SHARING. I REPLIED THAT THE PURCHASERS WOULD OBVIOUSLY HAVE A VOICE IN THAT BECAUSE FRANCE AND THE U.S. CANNOT DICTATE TO THE BELGIANS, DUTCH AND OTHERS THEIR CHOICE OF AIRCRAFT. SOUFFLET MENTIONED THE POSSIBILITY OF SOME SORT OF TRADE-OFF IN THE CIVIL AERONAUTICS FIELD. HE SUGGESTED THAT ARRANGEMENTS IN REGARD TO CONCORDE AND AIRBUS MIGHT PROVIDE THE BASIS FOR PROTECTING THE FRENCH AERONAUTICS INDUSTRY IF A U.S. PLANE REPLACES THE F-104. I TOLD HIM I SAW LITTLE POSSIBILITY OF A DEFENSE/CIVIL AVIATION DEAL

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BUT THAT I WOULD REPORT HIS VIEWS TO WASHINGTON.

5. NUCLEAR SUBJECTS: SOUFFLET UNDERSCORED FRENCH CONCERN ABOUT PROLIFERATION OF NUCLEAR WEAPONS. HE SAID THIS WAS AN IMPORTANT, SERIOUS DANGER WHICH SHOULD BE DISCUSSED AT THE SUMMIT. HE SAID HE FELT SALES OF ENRICHED URANIUM SHOULD BE CONTROLLED AND THAT SCIENTI-

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ACTION SS-25

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 SSO-00 NSCE-00 /026 W

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O 051750Z DEC 74

FM AMEMBASSY PARIS

TO SECSTATE WASHDC IMMEDIATE 4868

C O N F I D E N T I A L SECTION 02 OF 02 PARIS 29204

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FIC SAFEGUARDS ARE CLEARLY NECESSARY. WHILE WE AGREED THAT THIS WAS A TOPIC WHICH WOULD BE DISCUSSED AT THE SUMMIT, IT WAS CLEAR THAT SOUFFLET WAS NOT ENTIRELY SURE ABOUT GISCARD'S PERSONAL POSITION ON THE ISSUE. SOUFFLET SAID HE HOPED SOME MEANS COULD BE FOUND TO STEP UP FRANCO/AMERICAN COOPERATION ON NUCLEAR WEAPONS TO AVOID COSTLY DUPLICATIONS SUCH AS HAD OCCURRED IN THE PAST. HE SAID THE FRENCH WERE PARTICULARLY INTERESTED IN MIRV TECHNOLOGY. /WITHOUT COMMENT I TOLD HIM I WOULD PASS ON HIS VIEWS TO WASHINGTON.

6. COOPERATION VS. DOMINATION: SOUFFLET SAID THAT THERE ARE STRONG FEELINGS IN FRANCE THAT THE U.S. IS TRYING TO DOMINATE EUROPE AND HE DISCUSSED THE QUESTION IN FAMILIAR TERMS. I REPLIED, USING EQUALLY FAMILIAR ARGUMENTS' THAT THE U.S. WAS NOT TRYING TO DOMINATE EUROPE BUT SEEKS COOPERATION WITH FRANCE AND EUROPE ON THE BASIS OF EQUALITY AND MUTUAL RESPECT. HE SAID THE FRENCH PEOPLE WOULD BE WATCHING THE MARTINIQUE SUMMIT CLOSELY AS A BAROMETER OF FRANCO-AMERICAN RELATIONS. IT IS PARTICULARLY IMPORTANT, HE CONCLUDED, THAT THE TOASTS AND THE FINAL COMMUNIQUE REFLECT A SPIRIT OF COOPERATION AND FRIENDSHIP.
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Message Attributes

Automatic Decaptioning: Z
Capture Date: 01 JAN 1994
Channel Indicators: n/a
Current Classification: UNCLASSIFIED
Concepts: DIPLOMATIC DISCUSSIONS, COLLECTIVE SECURITY AGREEMENTS
Control Number: n/a
Copy: SINGLE
Draft Date: 05 DEC 1974
Decaption Date: 28 MAY 2004
Decaption Note: 25 YEAR REVIEW
Disposition Action: RELEASED
Disposition Approved on Date:
Disposition Authority: izenbei0
Disposition Case Number: n/a
Disposition Comment: 25 YEAR REVIEW
Disposition Date: 28 MAY 2004
Disposition Event:
Disposition History: n/a
Disposition Reason:
Disposition Remarks:
Document Number: 1974PARIS29204
Document Source: CORE
Document Unique ID: 00
Drafter: n/a
Enclosure: n/a
Executive Order: GS
Errors: N/A
Film Number: D740353-0436
From: PARIS
Handling Restrictions: n/a
Image Path:
ISecure: 1
Legacy Key: link1974/newtext/t19741258/aaaabxga.tel
Line Count: 166
Locator: TEXT ON-LINE, ON MICROFILM
Office: ACTION SS
Original Classification: CONFIDENTIAL
Original Handling Restrictions: EXDIS
Original Previous Classification: n/a
Original Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Page Count: 4
Previous Channel Indicators:
Previous Classification: CONFIDENTIAL
Previous Handling Restrictions: EXDIS
Reference: n/a
Review Action: RELEASED, APPROVED
Review Authority: izenbei0
Review Comment: n/a
Review Content Flags:
Review Date: 01 MAY 2002
Review Event:
Review Exemptions: n/a
Review History: RELEASED <01 MAY 2002 by elyme>; APPROVED <19 MAR 2003 by izenbei0>
Review Markings:

Declassified/Released
US Department of State
EO Systematic Review
30 JUN 2005

Review Media Identifier:
Review Referrals: n/a
Review Release Date: n/a
Review Release Event: n/a
Review Transfer Date:
Review Withdrawn Fields: n/a
Secure: OPEN
Status: NATIVE
Subject: COURTESY CALL ON MINISTER OF DEFENSE JACQUES SOUFFLET
TAGS: PFOR, FR
To: STATE
Type: TE
Markings: Declassified/Released US Department of State EO Systematic Review 30 JUN 2005